AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

 (Currently Amended) A method of creating a data path for a process executing on a server coupled to a storage area network (SAN), the SAN providing connectivity between the server and a storage device in the SAN, the method comprising:

parameterizing a set of attributes for a desired data path between the process and the storage device of the SAN; and

constructing the data path that provides said set of attributes, wherein said constructing step further comprises:

searching the SAN for a set of candidate storage devices;

identifying a candidate data path from the server to each candidate storage device of said set of candidate storage devices;

evaluating each said candidate data path against the set of attributes to rank said candidate data paths from a best candidate data path to a least best candidate data path according to the attributes; and

selecting said best candidate data path as the data path to be constructed by said constructing step.

- (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said set of attributes includes a pre-defined template.
- (Previously Presented) The method of claim 2 wherein said set of attributes includes a
 data path owner, application, and the server on which the application is executing.
- (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein said pre-defined template specifies a set of
 performance, availability, and cost metrics for the desired data path.

- 5. (Original) The method of claim 4 wherein said set of performance and availability metrics includes at least one of a number of threads, a security level, and a default volume size and characteristics, default path characteristics.
- (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said parameterizing step includes a step of entering a user-defined attribute for inclusion in said set of attributes.
- (Original) The method of claim 6 wherein said entering step includes entry of said user-defined attribute by use of a graphical user interface coupled to the SAN.
- 8. (Canceled)
- 9. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 A method of creating a data path for a process executing on a server coupled to a storage area network (SAN), the SAN providing connectivity between the server and a storage device in the SAN, the method comprising: parameterizing a set of attributes for a desired data path between the process and the storage device of the SAN; and
- constructing the data path that provides said set of attributes, wherein said constructing step further comprises:

searching the SAN for a set of candidate storage devices;

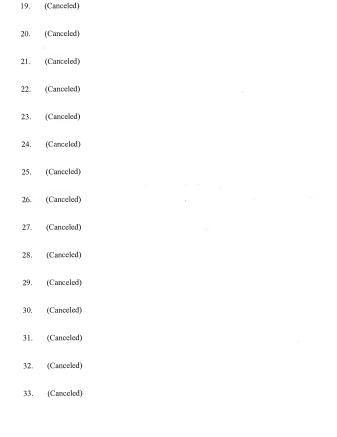
<u>constructingidentifying</u> a candidate data path from the server to each candidate storage device of said set of candidate storage devices;

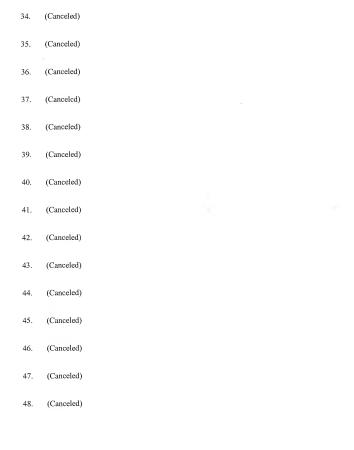
evaluating each said candidate data path against a selection metricitic set of attributes to rank said candidate data paths from a best candidate data path to a least best candidate data path according to said selection metricset of attributes;

presenting said ranked candidate data paths to a user for selection; and selecting a user-selected candidate data path as the data path to be constructed by said constructing step.

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- (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein said presenting step recommends said best candidate data path for selection by said user.
- 11. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein said best candidate data path is presented as a default selection at said selecting step.
- 12. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 9 wherein said selection metric includes storage device uptime information.
- (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein said selection metric includes performance information.
- 14. (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein said selection metric includes cost calculation.
- (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein said selection metric includes best SAN practices information.
- (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein said selection metric includes learned state and usage information of the SAN.
- 17. (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein said searching step prequalifies a subset of candidate data paths by finding those candidates that satisfy a pre-created policy prior to application of said evaluating step.
- 18. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein said constructed data path includes all physical, logical and security component identification and configuration information sufficient to operably link the process to an identified data volume of the SAN.





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49. (Canceled)